HIGHER KINNERTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE REMOTE MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON TUESDAY 16th JANUARY 2024 COMMENCING AT 6.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Cllr. C. Upton, Cllr. M. King, Cllr. Allport, Cllr. J. Swash, Cllr. Liddle, Cllr. Nugent, Liz Corner (Clerk).

23.089 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REASON GIVEN
Apologies for absence received from Cllr. Armstrong-Braun citing technical difficulties. Members noted the Chair had requested clarification from Cllr. Armstrong-Braun although no response had been received. The Chair advised Cllr. Gleave had confirmed his resignation in writing and would therefore not be in attendance.

23.090 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
No declarations of interest received.

23.091 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19th DECEMBER 2023
IT WAS RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th December 2023 meeting be approved.

23.092 UPDATES FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
The following matters arising from the minutes from the meeting on 19th December 2023 were noted for information:

Page 3 - Outdoor Art Mural Proposal - Cllr. Allport had arranged a meeting with Rev. Hana Amner to discuss the design and location for a village themed mural. Members noted the Village Hall Management Committee had approved the project and would liaise with Rev. Hana Amner regarding the potential for the mural to be displayed on a board affixed to the front of the village hall.

23.93 CORRESPONDENCE

1) Lloyds Bank Statements received by Clerk and checked and filed.
2) Email received from Flintshire County Council regarding the Draft Resource and Waste Strategy Email Email from One Voice Wales re 80th anniversary D Day commemorations with information re events planning and the Light of Peace. Members noted it remained unclear from the correspondence whether purchase monies for a Light of Peace would be used for commemorative or charitable purposes and further noted the HKCC would consider any potential event planning nearer the date of the 80th anniversary.
3) Email from Flintshire County Council and Traffic Wales re notification of works on A55 Warren Interchange. Members noted the information had been posted on Facebook and an article would be included in the February newsletter.
4) Email received from a resident requesting HKCC to take positive action to address the use of loud explosive fireworks. Members noted the Chair had confirmed with the resident that HKCC had encouraged responsible behaviour via a Facebook post and had set up a dedicated email address to enable residents to post prior notification if they were hosting Bonfire Night celebrations with fireworks. The post had not been well received and had resulted in heated discussions on Facebook. Members noted and agreed that whilst FCC may have powers to address the issue, HKCC were not empowered to prevent the use of fireworks. It was agreed that an article would be included in the October or November newsletter to encourage residents to use fireworks responsibly and considerately.
5) Email received from a resident requesting HKCC to post a warning on Facebook regarding pedestrian visibility on the road after the resident had to swerve her car to avoid a pedestrian wearing a camouflage outfit. Members noted that it was not within HKCC's remit to advise pedestrians in relation to road safety and noted the potential implications of people placing reliance on any such advice when HKCC did not have the expertise or jurisdiction to provide such safety advice and guidance.
6) Email from FCC re Summer Playscheme which members noted for comparison purposes to the cost and scope of the Dragon Sports Summer Camp. It was agreed the Dragon Sports Summer Camp provided enhanced provision at a lower cost which endorsed HKCC's decision to engage with Dragons Sports for the wider benefit provided to the community.
7) Email from One Voice Wales with a list of Jan-March training dates which members duly noted.

23.094 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

1) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business basics service December 2023) - £41.72 - payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.

2) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line business standard service December 2023) - £44.28 payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.

3) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line audio service December 2023) - £2.52 payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations

4) Microsoft Payment (HKCC On-line office 365 service December 2023) - £9.84 - payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.

5) Stablepoint Ltd (website hosting 24th January 2024 to 24th February 2024) - £29.99) payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations

6) Tesco (Christmas Event sundries) - £23.65 and £3.00 - payments by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.

7) Sainsburys (Christmas Event sundries) - £9.50 - payment by debit card. Expenditure incurred on behalf of HKCC and payment reported at the next meeting in accordance with Para. 6.6 Higher Kinnerton Community Council's Financial Regulations.

8) Maria Springett (bookkeeping services) - £600.00 - payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

9) Deeco Lighting (installation and removal of Christmas lights) - £1080.00 - payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

10) Backford Christmas Tree Farm (village Christmas trees) - £350.00 - payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

11) Majestic Wine (refund for glass hire and unopened wine from Christmas Event) - £149.91 – members noted the refund would be processed by Majestic Wine via by bank transfer to HKCC.

12) Tivoli Group Ltd (MRRG maintenance 1/12th annual value for 2023-2024) - £171.34 - payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

13) Planning Aid Wales (training) - £38.50 - payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

14) One Voice Wales (training) - £19.00 - payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

15) HMRC (N.I contribution Quarter 3 tax year 2023-2024) - £103.56 – payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King. All agreed. It was agreed that the Clerk as Service Administrator would proceed to facilitate the payment by internet banking transfer.

16) Clerk's salary January 2024 - £1,034.17 - payment proposed by Cllr. Liddle and seconded by Cllr. King. All agreed. Payable by standing order.

IT WAS RESOLVED to approve the Accounts for Payment listed on the January 2024 payment schedule and the Chair and the Clerk would sign the payment schedule to confirm the Accounts for Payment had been duly approved.

23.095 TO RECEIVE REPORTS IN RELATION TO:

COMMUNITY

a. Street scene Update – members noted FCC were unable to attend the catch-up meeting with the Streetscene Team requested by HKCC. A resident on Sandy Lane who had raised issues with flooding and blocked drains had informed the Clerk that following intervention by HKCC, FCC had attended and cleared several drains which had alleviated the issue.

b. Waste collection issues

Members noted a resident on Main Road had contacted HKCC re FCC's continual non collection of AHP (nappy) waste containers despite an assurance of collection by FCC following intervention by HKCC. The resident had escalated the matter to a complaint with FCC. Members further noted there had been several missed collections on Park Avenue between Christmas and New Year. It was agreed that Cllr. Allport as the local member would escalate the matter with FCC.

c. Dog fouling issues

Following a complaint from a resident, it was agreed Cllr. Allport would contact FCC regarding a replacement dog bin on footpath behind Kinnerton Meadows. Following a request from Cllr Upton for support with refilling dog waste bag containers, Cllr. Upton agreed to send a map identifying the location of the waste bag holders to members via email to enable members to agree which containers they could refill.

d. Planter refurbishment & new planters for outside school – update

Members noted it had been agreed at the December meeting to progress with the planter refurbishment. The Clerk had obtained a quotation in the sum of £1,336 from Wybone Ltd who had manufactured and supplied the planters originally. Members noted following inspection of the planters, Wybone would send the final quote for refurbishment. The Clerk advised £1,235 had been earmarked in 2023-2024 budget for planter refurbishment and any overspend could be vired from underspend elsewhere within the budget if agreed by members. Members concurred refurbishment rather than replacement of the existing planters provided best value for money and noted any refurbishment should be carried out by the original supplier to ensure the standard and design would not be compromised. Members agreed it would not be feasible for the Clerk to strive to obtain alternative quotations as referenced in HKCC's Financial Regulations for lower value quotations. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that subject to the Clerk verifying the final quotation an order would be placed for the planter refurbishment with any overspend being vired from underspend within the 2023-2024 budget. The Chair extended thanks to the village volunteers and to Cllr. Allport for assisting with emptying and placing the planters on Bennetts Lane corner ready for collection.

Members noted that following several chasers to FCC, the licences for the new planters had been agreed in principle by FCC subject to written confirmation of no objection from Streetscene. The existing planter supplier, Wybone Limited, had provided a quotation in the sum of £1,283 (including VAT) for 2 x rectangular and 2 x square planters and members noted £1,629 remained in the 2023-2024 budget for village improvements which included provision for new planters. The Clerk confirmed £1,500 had been included in 2024-2025 budget as earmarked reserves should the planters be purchased in 2024-2025. It was agreed that as a matter of due diligence, the new planter order should not be progressed until FCC had confirmed written approval had been received Streetscene and HKCC had received confirmation the planter licence would be granted.

e. Heritage Trail Update

Cllr. King appraised members regarding the imminent launch of the Heritage Trail and advised the Higher Kinnerton Walking Group had completed an inaugural walk of the trail. The walk had hi-lighted that in additional to the QR code a leaflet for distribution via the newsletter and focal points around the village including the noticeboards and the shop would assist in promoting the trial. Members noted it had been resolved at the December meeting to approve the expenditure and make the necessary arrangements required to launch the Heritage Trail**. IT WAS REOLVED to** approve payment for the heritage trail badges in the sum of £81.00 in accordance with the quotation received from Best Badges Ltd with payment to be processed prior to and reported at February meeting. Cllr. King advised the February newsletter would include a detailed article to promote the Heritage Trail.

f. Main Road Recreation Ground maintenance contract & tree surgery

Members noted the current contractor, Tivoli Services, had initially quoted £1,609 plus VAT for Main Road Recreation Ground maintenance in 2024 – 2025 and subsequently increased the quote to £1,886 plus VAT which exceeded the current contract price of £1,713 plus VAT. Members noted Tivoli Services had been subcontracting the work to Man Coed VM Ltd who were locally based and had been responsive and accommodating. Man Coed had provided a quotation in the sum of £1,713 plus VAT for Main Road Recreation Ground maintenance in 2024 – 2025. Members discussed on-going issues with Tivoli Ltd in relation to invoicing and the novation agreement. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the quotation for Main Road Recreation Ground maintenance in 2024-2025 from Man Coed VM Limited in the sum of £1,713.36 plus VAT for 14 visits per annum and to include hedge cutting**.**

Members noted quotations had been received from Last Branch Tree Surgery in the sum of £350.00 for proposed works to be carried out as soon as possible to fell and remove an ash tree showing signs of ash die back and in the sum of £650.00 to deadwood trees along the perimeter of MMRG in 2024-2025. Members noted £500.00 remained in the 2023-2024 budget for tree surgery and £900.00 had been included in the 2024-2025 draft budget for tree surgery. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the quotations and to place an order to proceed with the works required to fell and approve the ash tree. **IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED** to carry out the proposed works to deadwood trees along the perimeter of MMRG and to include the necessary provision within 2024-2025 budget for tree surgery.

g. Annual Community Meeting – arrangements and date

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with hosting the annual community meeting with a proposed date of 22nd March 2024 in the village hall for an informal cheese and wine evening. The Clerk agreed to check the availability of the village hall and to prepare a draft plan for the evening for members to review. The Clerk agreed to contact the volunteering and community groups to confirm expressions of interest in attending the event with the March newsletter to include details of final arrangements. Members noted it may be necessary to convene an extraordinary meeting to finalise arrangements prior to the February full Council meeting.

h. Easter Event – preliminary considerations

Following a robust discussion **IT WAS RESOLVED** not to proceed with hosting an Easter event due to the proximity to the annual community meeting and the potential lack of resource to organise and facilitate an Easter event. It was agreed HKCC would discuss hosting a village event later in the calendar year.

i. Christmas Event Update & Christmas Tree Removal

Members noted the 2023 Christmas Event had been a success. A summary of expenditure and the donation from bar and raffle proceeds to the Salvation Army had been circulated with the agenda papers. It was agreed HKCC would host the 2024 Christmas Event on Friday 20th December 2024. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve Christmas tree removal quotation in sum of £180.00 to be paid prior to and reported at February meeting.

COMMERCE /GOVERNANCE

a. 2024-2025 Budget Review and Precept Confirmation for 2024-2025

Following a robust review of the updated draft budget for 2024-2025 including expenditure from earmarked reserves and the Clerk's salary proposal **IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the budget and precept of £36,293 for 2024-2025. The Clerk agreed to send the official Precept Notification Form to FCC prior to the deadline of 25th January.

b. To receive the bank reconciliation

IT WAS RESOLVED the bank reconciliation for period ending 14th January 2024 be noted and agreed.

c. Accounting Software – update

Members noted following approval in principle at the December 2023 meeting that HKCC would transition to Easy PC Accounts package in 2024-2025, the Clerk had arranged a 3month free month free trial for the Easy Accounts Package from January to March 2024 and had received the documentation and database to commence the trial. Members noted and agreed the Clerk would liaise with Cllr. King to review and test the package to ensure its suitability for HKCC.

d. Councillor Vacancy

FCC had confirmed with the Clerk that no request for an election had been received and therefore HKCC could proceed to the co-option stage. Members noted and agreed the Clerk would prepare the co-option notice for HKCC's website and for an article to be included in the newsletter. It was further agreed that the Clerk should advise the resident who had previously expressed an interest in being co-opted and had been one of the candidates for co-option who attended the June 2022 meeting.

Cllr. Upton advised Cllr. Gleave's written confirmation of his resignation had been received prior to the meeting and expressed thanks and appreciation for Cllr. Gleave's dedication and contribution to HKCC. The Clerk appraised members regarding the process and timescales for publicizing and filling the vacancy. Cllr. Upton confirmed that Cllr. Liddle had reconsidered her position and would commit her continued support as a member of HKCC for another term from May 2024.

e. Appointment of Internal Auditor for 2023-2024 audit

Members agreed to re-appoint JDH Business Services as the internal auditor for HKCC for the 2023- 2024 audit. The Clerk agreed to confirm the appointment in writing.

f. Training Updates

The training requests and training updates for review and approval had been circulated with the agenda papers. Members noted the the forecast spend to 31.03.24 included the training requests and the cost would be within the £550.00 budget for 2023-2024**. IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the training expenditure and agreed the Clerk would attend to the booking arrangements.

g. Microsoft Account Updates

Members noted that updates to licence Microsoft configurations occurred when users were added or removed from the account following changes in membership of HKCC resulting in nominal changes to the licence fees included in the monthly Accounts for Payments schedules

The Chair affirmed that administration rights in relation to HKCC's Microsoft account were exclusively reserved to the Clerk, Chair and Vice Chair as a matter of due diligence and for security purposes and noted that a member of HKCC had attempted to gain access to the administrative platform.

The Clerk confirmed arrangements for the training session on the 17th of January to assist members with setting up the new Microsoft multifactor authentication security settings. Members noted the training was being hosted in good faith by HKCC for the benefit of all members and that the majority of members and the Clerk had successfully implemented the necessary changes to devices to secure ongoing access to the HKCC Microsoft platform.

COMMUNICATION

a. Newsletter Website & Facebook Updates

Members and the Clerk noted the deadline for submission of content for the February newsletter. Members noted it had been agreed to the November 2023 meeting that the Clerk would proceed to reimburse expenses related to the newsletter production on receipt of the relevant invoice and expenses claim form subject to any such reimbursement being reported at the next full Council meeting.
Members further noted Cllr. King and the Clerk had arranged a date to finalise the website updates prior to the February meeting.

Following queries regarding the legitimacy of Facebook advertising posts, members discussed and noted the criteria for advertising on the HKCC Facebook platform.

PLANNING - to review planning applications and decisions received since the December meeting.

Application Ref No: FUL/001105/23
Proposal: Rear & side extensions including part garage conversion with internal alterations
Location: 2, Tara, Llys Derwen, Higher Kinnerton, Chester
Date Received: 02.01.2024.
No comments or objections from HKCC

23.096 CHAIR'S REPORT

No further matters to report

23.097 REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Members noted the Play Inspection Company Annual Report for 2023 for the outdoor gym on MRRG had been received. Cllr. Nugent agreed to prepare a summary of actions required for discussion at the February meeting.

23.098 To confirm the date of the next meeting

Members noted the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 20th February 2024 commencing at 6.30 p.m.

The meeting concluded at 20.40 p.m.